

FEATURES



Lance Cpl. Brian Kester Robert Pennington, a Battery Creek High School senior, attended the National Young Leaders Conference in Washington. He was selected to attend the conference because of excellence in academics and extracurricular activities, which include wrestling and JROTC.

LANCE CPL. BRIAN KESTER

STAFF WRITER

Family Child Care Orientation training is held regularly to establish good business practices, child development training, FCC policies, safety, sanitation, child abuse awareness, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and first aid prior to certification as a Family Child Care provider. “The course is six days and is held every other month, with the next taking place in January,” said Kathy Chamberlain, the Family Child Care Director, MCAS. “The course is open to all military affiliates in military housing or off base, including Parris Island, Pine Grove, Laurel Bay and the Naval Hospital.” The course lays out rules, reg-

ulations and imaginative programming for running a family day care center at your home. “We are going through Creative Curriculum, a day care program that is being endorsed Marine Corps-wide,” said Chamberlain. “It was started about a year ago and it is being taught and put into practice at all Marine Corps bases.” Creative Curriculum’s concepts have surprised many of its students -- even the students who have children of their own. “I have gotten a lot of information I didn’t think I needed to care for children,” said Gloria Colon, student in the FCC and mother of one whose husband is Sgt. Eddie L. Colon, a drill instructor with 2nd RTBn. “I will use this knowledge hands on, applying it to

my own child and all of the kids I will care for.” Along with knowledge they can use in the future, the course has also answered questions from many of the students’ past. “I have gotten a lot of knowledge on the behavior of children and the way that their minds actually work,” said Amy Pasquale, a student whose husband, Sgt. Patrick B. Pasquale works with MALS 31 at the Air Station. “When my son was born, I was still a little hesitant in handling him. If I had taken this course prior to that, I probably would have had more knowledge and confidence up front.” Pasquale has also learned ways to communicate more efficiently with the children. “The information I gain here

will help me to speak with the children on their level, not as if they were adults,” said Pasquale. “I will apply it to my children everyday, to give them what they need to become successful, caring adults.” According to Chamberlain, in order to teach children this young, the kids will require a more hands-on approach. “If you are going to show the children an apple, show them an apple, not a picture of one,” said Chamberlain. “Using natural discovery will let them find things out for themselves.” In addition to communication skills, students will also learn how to organize a curriculum for the children.

“I have all of this knowledge and I intend not to transfer the knowledge to them, but to teach them the little things I picked up on in class,” said Colon. “We will have playtime inside and out, paint, and the children like to pretend, so I hope to inspire those kinds of activities in the children as opposed to just putting them down in front of the television.” Having children at your house and under your care involves responsibility, and there are going to be some operating costs associated with that, said Chamberlain. There are three main expenses: \$35 initial fee for the course,

\$125 for installation of a main line smoke detector, that will be located in the areas where the children will sleep, and a liability insurance cost of \$180 a month. Chamberlain believes the expenditure of money, time and effort are acceptable, considering the rewards of shaping young minds. “The comment I always get during this course is, even if I don’t have a daycare at my home I will always be able to apply this information to my own children,” said Chamberlain. For more information, contact Chamberlain on the Air Station at 228-7279.

Marine’s son takes trip to Congress

Local teen selected for prestigious National Young Leaders Conference

LANCE CPL. BRIAN KESTER

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If you could meet with members of Congress, what questions would you ask? This was an issue on the minds of a select few teens that went to the National Young Leaders Conference held Oct. 28 - Nov. 2 in Washington. Robert Pennington, a Battery Creek High School senior, was one of those teenagers wondering what questions he would ask. Robert, son of Maj. Henry L. Pennington, operations officer for the Eastern Recruiting Region, was selected to attend the prestigious conference because of his excellence in academics, as well as his extracurricular activities, which include wrestling and Junior Reserve

Officers Training Corps. “I am proud of his accomplishment,” said Pennington. “It was an honor for him to be selected and it was a great experience for him to go to Washington and learn what our national leaders do.” During Robert’s trip, he was taken around Washington and shown some of the historical sites and sounds of the city. He met many new people and gained many new experiences during his trip. “At first I was a little nervous, but once I got there, it was very exciting,” said Robert. “I only expected to learn about how the government works, but ended up learning about how to listen and be open-minded to other peoples’ opinions.” One of Robert’s biggest thrills came when he was able to interact with youth his own age from across the globe. “It was very exciting being able to meet and interact with different people from different cultures around the United States,” said Robert. “I met peo-

ple from Puerto Rico, Alaska, and Hawaii.” Although he made new friends and saw new things, Robert had to work hard to get there -- in school and out. “I am a member of the JROTC marksmanship team and the drill team, which come at the same time as wrestling,” said Robert. “So my Coach, Philip Whitker and my JROTC leader, Maj. Jeff McGill worked out a deal for me to participate in both.” Pulling a double duty developed Robert’s resolve and led to McGill’s recommendation to attend the Young Leaders Conference. “I was recommended because of my dedication in everything I do and everything I start,” said Robert. “I push through to the end and don’t quit.” Robert’s can-do attitude does not go overlooked by either of his parents. “He has a lot of potential, and we want him to live up to that potential,” said his mother, Brenda. According to Robert,

growing up around the Marine Corps has strengthened his son’s will to succeed, and he believes his son is intent on following in his footsteps. “If my dad was not in the military then I wouldn’t be here and I wouldn’t have gotten these awards,” said Robert. “I am getting ready to graduate and don’t really know where I will go. I would like to attend Norwich University in Vermont, because it is where the ROTC started and they have a good wrestling program.” Pennington believes his son has wrestled with the idea of becoming a Marine Corps officer. “In Junior ROTC I am a leader, and can carry that over into the Marine Corps,” said Robert. “The leaders of tomorrow meeting the leaders of today,” is a brief description of the National Young Leaders Conference on their Web site. With the open mind and the leadership skills he acquired during the conference, Robert is set to march into a bright future.

FCC offers Tri-Command child care providers training